

King's College London

Postgraduate Admissions Policy

1. Introduction

This policy applies to all categories of applicants to accredited programmes of postgraduate (PG) study and is intended to provide a central framework to inform all policies and procedures involved in recruitment, selection and admissions.

King's College London is committed to the recruitment of students with the greatest academic ability and potential, irrespective of their social, cultural and economic background.

The university is committed to equality in education and applications are considered on their individual merits; utilising a holistic approach and based on all information provided to King's through the application process.

King's is committed to fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices and aims to offer clear advice and guidance to prospective applicants to enable them to make informed choices.

This policy is consistent with good admissions practice in higher education, as defined in the Quality Assurance Agency's 'UK Quality Code for Higher Education' and the Schwartz Report 'Fair admissions to higher education: recommendations for good practice' and complies with current legislation affecting the admission of students.

2. Role and responsibilities

2.1 At postgraduate level, King's operates a mixed admissions process. For some programmes, academic admissions tutors set entry requirements which are then applied by the professional admissions staff who are responsible for processing decisions. Non-standard and marginal applications will be sent to the Admissions Tutor for review.

2.2 For many programmes, admissions staff will conduct an initial assessment or short listing of applicants, and then will refer their recommendation to the admissions tutor for a final decision. This is the standard process for Postgraduate Research programmes.

King's Admissions Office staff and Admissions Tutors are provided with regular and detailed training to ensure decisions comply with the Postgraduate Admissions Policy and all related policies.

3. Academic entry criteria

3.1 King's publishes entry criteria in a printed and online prospectus and in external sources of information, advice and guidance.

- 3.2 In line with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) advice to higher education on consumer protection law, the information aims to be accurate, clear, unambiguous and timely. As such, King's aims to avoid altering admissions criteria during the course of the application cycle.
- 3.3 King's accepts applicants with a wide range of qualifications and publishes the range of qualification equivalences on our online prospectus. Where an equivalency has not been published, enquiries to prospective@kcl.ac.uk are welcomed. King's is committed to a regular review of entry requirements.
- 3.4 The published entry requirements reflect a typical offer; however, meeting or being predicted to meet this does not guarantee an offer. This is due to variations in the number of applications we receive each cycle.
- 3.5 Applicants considering Postgraduate Taught programmes (PGT) are expected to have obtained an undergraduate degree at the point of enrolment on to the programme at King's, the typical minimum entry requirements are an Upper Second Class degree (2.1) or equivalent.

Applicants considering Postgraduate Research programmes (PGR) would normally be expected to have obtained an undergraduate degree (typically a 2.1) and a higher degree in a relevant subject, or equivalent, and in many cases a Master's degree is required.

Applications will be assessed against the advertised entry requirements for the selected programme.

- 3.6 The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) is responsible for safeguarding the quality and standards of degree programmes across the UK. Therefore, King's does not explicitly discriminate between UK degrees awarded a similar classification. However, where similar regulatory institutional standards are not in place across the country, King's may demonstrate the right to differentiate between different institutions. King's may do this through the use of research, market intelligence and the performance of existing students.

4. Subject specific requirements

- 4.1 Specific subject requirements for each programme are clearly listed in the online prospectus. If a degree in a specific subject or field is listed as required, an application will not be considered if this is not listed as completed or pending completion.

5. English language requirements

- 5.1 All students are required to prove their English language proficiency.
- 5.2 English language requirements vary between programmes, the online prospectus lists the requirement for each programme and what is accepted as meeting this English language requirement.

6. Application assessment

- 6.1 King's considers all aspects of the application as part of a holistic approach to selection and admissions.

This may include some or all of the following elements: predicted or achieved performance in undergraduate and/or postgraduate qualifications, a personal statement, a research proposal, references (normally two), work experience, evidence of English language proficiency, performance at interview, a sample of written work, the academic and geo-demographic context in which qualifications have been achieved and being completed and/or extenuating or mitigating circumstances.

6.2

King's may require applicants to complete additional admissions tests as part of the selection process, these may be organised by King's or by external agencies. For programmes where this is a requirement, this will be clearly indicated in the online prospectus.

Certain programmes, many of which have professional accreditation embedded as part of the programme, require students to attend interviews or selection days. Applicants are advised to read the Admissions Interviewing Policy for details regarding how interviews are conducted at King's.

6.3

King's may request additional written work or a detailed research proposal. When this is required, it will be made clear as to reason for the request and how it will be assessed.

6.4

As PGR programmes require advanced research into very specific academic queries, successful applicants will be those whose proposed area of research could be appropriately supervised according to the College's current academic expertise and supervisor availability.

It is the applicant's responsibility to identify an appropriate supervisor for their research prior to submitting an application. Information regarding staff research areas is available in the online prospectus.

7. **Application procedure**

7.1 Applications to all full time and part time postgraduate degree programmes are submitted through the King's admissions portal, King's Apply.

7.2 Applications to visiting and exchange programmes and King's Online (distance learning) are also submitted directly through King's Apply.

7.3 Applicants are only permitted to register once via King's Apply, whether through an agent or direct, but may apply to more than one programme within a single admissions cycle. These applications will be considered and processed in accordance with the stated order of preference.

In addition to completion of the application form some Postgraduate Research applicants, particularly those considering Health related programmes, may need to complete a Project Approval Form.

Several PGT programmes require a non-refundable application fee of £40. This is part of the online application process. Payment of an application fee is not a guarantee that you will receive an offer for your chosen course as many of our courses are competitive.

- 7.4 Applications to the Professional Certificate in Education (PGCE) and Nursing with Registration (graduate entry) PG Dip are submitted through Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).
- 7.5 Applications can typically be submitted from September, a year before the intended start date at the university.
- 7.6 The deadline for applications varies by programme and can be as early as December (nine months before the programme starts). In a very few cases and if places are still available, applications will be considered close to the point of enrolment. The online prospectus lists the deadline for each programme.
- 7.7 The majority of programmes operate on rolling admissions, with decisions being processed from October each year. All decisions are communicated to applicants through King's Apply and all applications submitted by the deadline are considered equally.
- 7.8 Applications submitted after the deadline are considered on an individual basis after all 'on-time' applications have been fully considered.
- 7.9 King's reserves the right to close postgraduate programmes to applications at any point after the published deadline.
- 7.10 Applicants should be aware that in addition to general application deadlines there may be additional funding deadlines for both internal and external grants, scholarships and other funding options.
- 7.11 Successful applicants must meet all their offer conditions in sufficient time to complete enrolment administration, including obtaining a Tier 4 visa (if required). International students should be aware that applications may not be considered if submitted after 31st July due to time limitations in obtaining a Tier 4 Visa for the September enrolment period.
- 7.12 Applicants considering deferred entry are advised to consult the relevant programme page on the online prospectus for any programme-specific guidance or restrictions on deferred entry.
- PGT programmes typically allow applicants to defer entry for one academic year.
- PGR programme deferrals are dependent upon agreement from your proposed supervisor, who will need to consider if appropriate supervision will still be available the following academic year.
- All deferral requests must be submitted in writing through King's Apply stating why you would like to defer. The Admissions Office will respond with further advice (any funding, visa, or accommodation arrangements may be affected). Requests for deferral must be received by the admissions before the end of the late enrolment period for scheduled start of the programme; after this date they will not be considered.
- 7.13 King's College reserves the right to withdraw an offer from a candidate who is considered, on justifiable grounds, to be unsuitable for a place on a particular programme according to individual circumstances. Where relevant to the

programme, Disclosure and Barring Service checks, Occupational Health appointments and Fitness to Practice information may also form part of the assessment of an applicant's suitability.

- 7.14 Applicants should be aware that under the Data Protection Act 1998, King's is only able to speak directly with them unless we have specific permission from the applicant to speak to a nominated contact.

8. Fraud and plagiarism

- 8.1 It is essential that any personal statement or other written materials submitted as part of an application are the work of the applicant. King's may use similarity detection software to evaluate the originality of a piece of work.
- 8.2 If it is detected that a personal statement or other written materials may be plagiarised, or that any other element of an application may be fraudulent, no offer or invitation to interview or a selection day will be made until the matter has been resolved.
- 8.3 Any irregularities in the personal statement or other written materials will be investigated by contacting the applicant through King's Apply. Where an application is due to be rejected on academic grounds, no further action will be taken with regard to any suspected fraud or plagiarism
- 8.4 King's reserves the right to withdraw an offer if incorrect or misleading information is provided in the application. King's also reserves the right to amend or withdraw an offer if a genuine error has been made at offer making.

9. Disclosure of criminal convictions

- 9.1 King's recognises its duty to protect the King's community and the communities around us, and that information regarding an individual's criminal convictions may need to be taken into account when deciding whether that individual may begin or continue their studies.

The application process requires applicants to disclose relevant unspent convictions.

- 9.2 Programmes involving interaction with children and/or vulnerable adults require applicants to disclose all convictions, including cautions, reprimands, final warnings, bind over orders and spent convictions. For such programmes or modules where an enhanced disclosure is required, the online prospectus will give details of this requirement and instructions and guidance will be available from the Admissions Office.
- 9.3

- Applicants with declared criminal convictions are initially assessed on standard academic and non-academic selection criteria. If it is recommended that an offer be made, further investigation of the relevance of the criminal conviction(s) will be carried out before the final decision is made.
- 9.4

Detailed information regarding this policy can be found in the [Criminal Conviction Declarations \(student applications\) Policy](#).

10. Mitigating circumstances

- 10.1 King's understands circumstances beyond an applicant's control, such as illness or bereavement, may detrimentally affect their academic progress.

In such instances and for entry to postgraduate programmes, King's expects applicants to have taken appropriate action to ensure the relevant examination bodies have allowed for such circumstances prior to the announcement of results or following an appeal.

11. Disabled applicants

- 11.1 Applications from disabled applicants will be considered based upon academic merit and potential for their chosen programme. Any support needs or adjustments will be considered independently of the admissions decision. Where an applicant believes that their disability has impacted detrimentally upon their academic performance to date, they should notify the College using the mitigating circumstances procedure outlined in Section 11.3.
- 11.2 Applicants to programmes of study with 'fitness to practise' criteria (for example Medicine, Nursing, and Midwifery) will be required to complete an occupational health questionnaire if they are successful in gaining an offer.
- 11.3 The Disability Advisory Service provides applicants with information, advice and guidance on disability support issues.

12. Age requirement

- 12.1 The College does not operate a minimum or maximum age requirement for the large majority of its programmes of study; however, students must be able to demonstrate the maturity and personal skills, as well as academic potential, required to succeed on a university level course and benefit from a university education.
- 12.2 Programmes requiring a Disclosure and Barring Service Check may have a minimum age requirement. The online prospectus provides details of this requirement and additional guidance is available from the Admissions Office.

13. Unsuccessful applications- feedback

- 13.1 King's operates a competitive admissions system and therefore a considerable number of applicants may be unsuccessful.

King's is happy to provide feedback to any candidate whose application has been unsuccessful.

All requests for feedback should be made in writing via King's Apply within one month of the decision.

- 13.2 Following feedback, if a candidate wants to appeal the admissions decision, the process, as outlined in Section 16 should be followed.

14. Complaints and appeals procedure

- 14.1 Applicants who are unsuccessful in applying for admission to study at the university, and who wish to appeal the decision, should follow the two stage appeal process as outlined in the Admissions Appeal Procedure.

- 14.2 Receipt of the appeal shall normally be acknowledged within 10 working days, with the response to the appeal normally being provided within a further 20 working days. Where the appeal is upheld, the response will indicate the outcome of the reconsideration of the application.
- 14.3 Applicants who do not wish to appeal the decision made on their application, but who are dissatisfied with their experience or the service they received during the application process, may make use of the two stage complaints process as outlined in the [Admissions Complaints Procedure](#). Applicants are recommended to attempt informal resolution of any complaint at the local level before initiating a formal complaint.

16. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Admissions Manager (Policy, Data & Enquiries) and revised in light of changes in legislation and the strategic priorities of the College. If you have any enquiries regarding this policy, please direct them to apet-admin@kcl.ac.uk .

College Education Committee

May 2016